

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

This Document contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, Sections 793 and 794, of the U.S. Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. The reproduction of this form is prohibited.

SECRET

25X1

25X1

COUNTRY	Korea	REPORT NO.	
SUBJECT	A Rumor Circulated by ROK Schoolteachers	DATE DISTR.	14 July 1953
	25X1	NO. OF PAGES	1 25X1
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	
PLACE ACQUIRED			

BY CABLE

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

25X1 On 6 July 1953 Korean schoolteachers spread a rumor crediting an American observatory with a report that a large comet would collide with the earth about 13 August 1953, resulting in the probable destruction of the earth. The rumor was spread widely and was taken seriously by the people, who are highly susceptible to superstition. One well-educated physician believed the report.

25X1 Comment. The rumor was not acknowledged in the Korean press or radio until the morning of 9 July, when the ROK government issued a denial of the report in the press. The rumor was apparently officially inspired, since President RHEE exerts a tight control of the students through the teachers. Prior to the ROK's official denial, the rumor appeared possibly to be a significant attempt to induce the attitude of desperation and fatalism in the Korean people, who would then be receptive to desperate acts. The date of the impending crisis tied in with reports of a possible ROK Army attack in mid-August.

SECRET

25X1

STATE	#X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC					
CINCPAC															

(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X"; Field Distribution By "#".)